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Academy of Science, Dr. Engelmann has gone more extensively into the different questions relating to the North American species of *Abies*."

Until this very needful revision appears, the following characters, drawn from my own specimens, may serve to designate more particularly our welcome newcomer from the mountains.

Abies subalpina Eng., n. sp. Tall and slim, 80 to 100 feet high, often 50 feet without branches; bark smooth, white, and covered with vesicles to near the base; leaves 6 to 12 lines long, less than a line broad, not twisted near the base, bisulcate and somewhat glaucous on the lower (outer) side, short-pointed, obtuse or slightly emarginate, those on the lower branches 2-ranked and spreading, those on the upper scattered, crowded, and more or less appressed, shorter on fertile than on sterile branchlets; cones $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 inches long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches thick, solitary, erect, ovate or oblong, obtuse, greenish; scales 6 to 10 lines long and about as broad, horizontal and close-pressed, broad-cuneate, unguiculate, the rounded upper margin somewhat reflexed and resinous, pubescent; bracts short, white with a dark base, erose-dentate all round, their slightly elevated summits furnished with a strong mucro; seeds large, the wing covering nearly the whole surface of the scale; sterile aments 2 inches long, 3 lines in diameter, marked longitudinally and somewhat spirally by the dark centres of the otherwise light brown mucronate scales. — LESTER F. WARD.

BOTANICAL PAPERS IN RECENT PERIODICALS. — *Flora*, Nos. 16 and 17. J. Sachs, On Emulsion Figures, and Clustering of Swarm Spores in Water (continued in No. 17, and not yet finished). A. de Krempelhuber, Brazilian Lichens. Worthington Smith, The Resting Spores of *Peronospora infestans*. No other journals have come to hand at this date.

ZOOLOGY.

HABITS OF THE WHITE-FOOTED MOUSE. — The white footed mouse (*Mus leucopus*) sometimes takes up its abode in deserted bird's-nests. Audubon, in his work on the Quadrupeds of North America, speaks of this peculiar habit. He says it has been known to take possession of deserted bird's-nests, such as those of the cat-bird, red-winged starling, song-thrush, and red-eyed flycatcher. One day toward the end of August, 1875, I found one of these mice in the deserted nest of a red-eyed flycatcher (*Vireo olivaceus*); it was on the border of a thick forest in the Blueridge Mountains, Monroe County, Pa. The nest was situated near the extremity of one of the limbs of a sapling or young tree, a few feet from the ground. The mouse had completely stopped up the inside of the nest with dried grass, leaving just enough room to squeeze itself through, and have a comfortable bed at the bottom. It was inside of the nest when I found it, but afterwards escaped. When I first observed this peculiar structure I could not make out what it was; but on thrusting my finger through the dried grass, I discovered the strange tenant.

It moved off, after getting out of the nest, in a rather sluggish manner, as this species is nocturnal and sleeps during the day. — SPENCER TROTTER.

THE BLUEBIRD FEEDING ON AMPELOPSIS. — On the 2d of April, 1876, this city was visited by remarkably large numbers of the bluebird (*Sialia sialis* Baird). This was its first appearance in abundance this season, only a few stray individuals having previously paid us a "flying visit," during the wonderful installment of warm weather with which we were favored in January. The day was cold, and the frozen ground was partially covered with snow, the remains of the heavy fall of a few days before. Awakened before six o'clock in the morning by the loud twitterings of the birds, I found my visitors busily devouring the berries of the Virginian creeper (*Ampelopsis quinquefolia* Michx.), the vines of which extend over the whole of the easterly side of my house. They having been uncommonly prolific the past season, the branches were thickly covered with clusters of the purple fruit, which adhered to the stems all through the winter. From morning till night the bluebirds, continuing to arrive, crowded the vines, voraciously eating the berries, of which, in their eagerness, they broke off nearly as many as they swallowed. The next day the weather suddenly became milder, and the birds disappeared. — HENRY GILLMAN, Detroit, Mich.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL NEWS. — In the third volume of the Transactions of the Academy of Sciences of St. Louis, Mr. A. J. Conant has published an article upon the archæology of Missouri, especially the caves of the Ozark Mountains and the mounds and earthworks on the banks of Bayou St. John, in the southeastern portion of the State.

The *New York Tribune* of July 7th records the tragic death of L. H. Cheney, a member of the Harvard Summer School of Geology, at Cumberland Gap. While excavating a mound with three others, he was buried by the falling earth. His companions were saved.

The State Archæological Association of Indiana will hold its first annual meeting in the rooms of the state geologist at Indianapolis, on the 17th and 18th of October. In addition to the regular sessions, excursions will be made to interesting localities. Provisions are also on foot to establish a museum and library. We heartily commend this scheme, and believe that exhaustive special collections are necessary to supplement the National and the Peabody Museums.

The *North American Review* for July contains Mr. Lewis H. Morgan's paper, read before the last meeting of the National Academy on the Houses of the Mound Builders. The distinguished author believes that the mural mounds were the foundations of the communal dwellings of village Indians, and that they can be understood by the study of similar structures now existing or known to have existed since the commencement of American exploration.